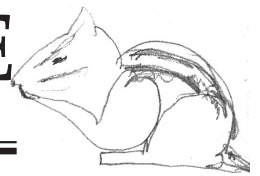


CORNWALL CHRONICLE



VOLUME 19 : NUMBER 9 OCTOBER 2009

Company Town

If the recent arrival of four new businesses in our town is any indicator, then the Recession of '09 may finally be on the wane.

In West Cornwall, Jay and Kevin McLaughlin, owners of the clothing retail chain J. McLaughlin, have purchased the new building at the south end of Railroad Square primarily to warehouse, care for, and display a large collection of Americana gathered during the last several decades. Jay McLaughlin said the space might also become an outlet for seasonal sales of excess clothing inventory as well as duplicate or de-accessioned collectibles.

Next door, Janet Carlson Sanders and John Sanders of Brooklyn are busy renovating the circa-1890 railroad depot to house their business, One Eleven Interactive Inc. (downstairs), and themselves, four-year-old twins Harry and Ellie, and two cats (upstairs). According to Janet, the company connects pharmaceutical companies to physicians through online and mobile channels to provide a cost-effective way to get samples into the hands of doctors.

Across the brook and up the street, artists Jackie Saccoccio and Carl D'Alvia have converted the former West Cornwall Market (aka Yutzler's) into their studio for painting and sculpture. The talented couple transferred their base of operations from New York City

earlier this year. While the space is not set up for retail operations, Carl and Jackie invite all to stop by and visit. The newly grassed area will eventually become an outdoor work/display space and garden.

Downriver, in Cornwall Bridge, Stephen Sperduto recently opened Housatonic Fine Art and Custom Framing, which shares space with the Housatonic Valley Rug Shop. Stephen has 20 years' experience working with archival/museum-quality antique prints, original vintage posters, fine art photography, and precious children's art. Hours are currently by appointment (619-8097), since he doubles as a chef at Baird's General Store.

—Henry Labalme

Mostly Plants?

Michael Pollan's message is firm and clear: "Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants." To judge by the enthusiasm of his audience at CCS on August 15, he was preaching to the choir; Cornwall is already wise to the dangers of processed food and the duplicity of its marketers.

But nobody's perfect, so the *Chronicle* thought it useful to interview a random group of Cornwall eaters. The subtext: "Are you virtuous when Michael Pollan isn't right there inspiring you?" The actual question: "If you had to give up all the incorrect stuff,

what would be the last thing to go?"

An otherwise devout vegetarian mentioned "Reese's Peanut Butter Cups and Nodine's Applewood Smoked Bacon—not together, of course." A defiant omnivore said she goes to the center aisle to get Chips Ahoy! cookies, avoiding the perimeter of the store where the fresh foods are kept.

Twinkies are still the Love that Dare Not Speak Its Name. But how about Nabs, those Day-Glo orange crackers that you used to find at highway rest stops? How about TastyKake Krimpets, the kind your mother slipped into your lunch box? What of the majestic Fudgsicle, such a fine source of the triglycerides that your great-grandmother did not have in her store cupboard and would not recognize?

Let the final word come from the most impassioned respondent: "Hell will freeze over before I willingly give up those BLTs!"

—Franny Taliaferro

Mr. Pierzga Goes to Hartford

On August 20, longtime Cornwall resident Frank Pierzga traveled to Hartford with First Selectman Gordon Ridgway to appear at a hearing before the Probate Court Redistricting Committee. That panel was assigned by the state legislature to reduce the number of probate courts in Connecticut from 117 to 50. Appearing as a private citizen in an audience

(continued on page 2)

OCTOBER 2009

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|---|--|---|---|---|--|
| Every Week This Month: Mondays: Jam Session, 7:30 P.M. Call 672-0229 for Location; Men's Adult Basketball, 7:30 P.M. CCS Gym Tuesdays: Adult Volleyball, 7 P.M. CCS Gym Wednesdays: Stretch Class, 5 P.M. Town Hall; Women's Adult Basketball, 7:30 P.M. CCS; Tai Chi, 6 P.M. Call 672-0064 | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 SUKKOTH Cornwall Village Improvement Society 10 A.M. Town Hall † Cornwall Assoc. Annual Meeting 4 P.M. Library † Community Contra Dance 7 P.M. Town Hall |
| 4 | 5 Region One Bd. of Ed. 6 P.M. HVRHS Park & Rec. 7 P.M. Library Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 P.M. Town Hall Agricultural Comm. 7:30 P.M. | 6 Inland Wetlands 7:30 P.M. Town Office | 7 | 8 | 9 CCS Walk-A-Thon 1 P.M. † <i>Travels With Bob</i> preview party 6-8 P.M. Library † | 10 Book Sale 9 A.M.-3 P.M. Library † Hazardous Waste Collection 9 A.M.-2 P.M. Torrington † Motherhouse Apple Workshop 10:30 A.M.-1:30 P.M. Local Farm Barn † |
| 11 Motherhouse Milking Stool Workshop 10 A.M.-4 P.M. Local Farm Barn † Book Sale 11 A.M.-3 P.M. Library † Meditation Group 1 P.M. Debra Tyler's House † | 12 COLUMBUS DAY CCS Closed Half-Price Book Sale 9 A.M.-Noon Library † Blood Pressure Screening Noon-1 P.M. UCC | 13 Seasonal Flu Shots 10 A.M.-Noon Library † Housatonic River Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library P&Z 7:30 P.M. Town Hall | 14 | 15 Deadline: November Chronicle Copy Bd. of Ed. 5 P.M. CCS Library Bd. of Finance 7:30 P.M. CCS Library VFW Post 9856 8 P.M. West Cornwall Firehouse | 16 | 17 |
| 18 Meditation Group 1 P.M. Debra Tyler's House † Cornwall Conservation Trust Annual Meeting 1 P.M. † | 19 | 20 Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 P.M. Town Hall | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 Elise Lemire Talk and Book Signing 3 P.M. Library † |
| 25 | 26 ZBA 7:30 P.M. Town Hall* | 27 | 28 Cornwall Vol. Fire Dept. 8 P.M. West Cornwall Firehouse | 29 | 30 | 31 HALLOWEEN Halloween Gathering 5-8 P.M. Town Hall † |

*Check with Zoning Office—672-4957

† Details in Events and Announcements

(continued from page 1)

composed mostly of elected officials, Mr. Pierzga argued for a plan that modified the first draft considered by the committee.

That draft proposal would have included Cornwall in a district with Winsted; the site for all court business would have moved to Winsted from its current site in North Canaan. This location would add time, cost, and distance to the trip for those using the court's services. Mr. Pierzga asked the committee to consider the fact that many of those served by the probate courts, which deal primarily with wills and estates, are senior citizens in "an already stressful situation." Furthermore, he pointed out, "the election process [for probate judges] would be flawed, as the large towns [Winsted] will overpower the smaller towns."

Mr. Pierzga asked the committee to consider a reconfigured Litchfield Hills Probate District, proposed by Northwest Corner Probate Judge Charlie Vail; that new district would include the six towns of Region One plus Litchfield, Norfolk, Warren, Morris, Harwinton, and Thomaston. The current Northwest Corner District, approved by the legislature in 2004, includes Cornwall, North Canaan, Canaan, Salisbury, Sharon, and Norfolk. Under the 12-town plan proposed by Judge Vail and advocated by Mr. Pierzga, the principal court would be in Litchfield, but the current Northwest court in North Canaan would remain as a satellite court. That grouping, points out Maggie Cooley, Cornwall's probate judge for 20 years when the town had its own court, reflects the "culture of our slower-paced towns."

Gordon Ridgway sensed that the redistricting committee was impressed by Mr. Pierzga's presence as a private citizen and by his testimony. He was correct; the committee incorporated the 12-town alignment in the plan it adopted unanimously on September 3. The General Assembly must now vote up or down on the proposal by October 15. Mr. Pierzga has written a letter to the committee expressing his renewed confidence in the democratic process.

—Barbara Gold

No TARP for NIB

With bank bailouts, foreclosures, and people desperate to refinance exotic mortgages filling the news every day, I wondered how our local bank in Cornwall compared to the national scene. The National Iron Bank is no Johnny-come-lately. It was founded in Falls Village in 1847, more than 160 years ago. The Cornwall Bridge branch was established in 1963 and moved to its current location in 1974.

In a brief conversation, Ed Schumann, manager of the local branch, assured me that NIB has remained profitable throughout the current national financial crisis, and no, it did not need any government loans from TARP (the Troubled Asset Relief Program). It also did not have to lay off any employees and, to the best of Ed's knowledge, did not pay any multimillion-dollar bonuses to employees, either.

Regarding mortgages, Ed said the bank holds and services its own 10- and 15-year mortgages but generally sells 30-year mortgages to others. He noted that the bank currently has no delinquent loans on the books and no foreclosures.

As for new loans and refinancings, Ed indicated that money is available for qualified borrowers. No, the bank doesn't lend money to just anyone with a pulse—seemingly one of the few requirements until last year on a national basis—but then it never did. The bank currently requires a 20 percent down payment, good credit score, and sufficient assets to repay the loan. As Ed pointed out, NIB makes loans the old-fashioned way. He said that refinancings have been busy recently, since rates are lower than several years ago, and loans are also available on a fixed-rate basis. Mortgages for new purchases have been slow, reflecting reduced activity in the local real estate market.

"Although we are a small bank," said Ed, "we are very competitive and offer up-to-date technology. Plus we know your name when you come in."

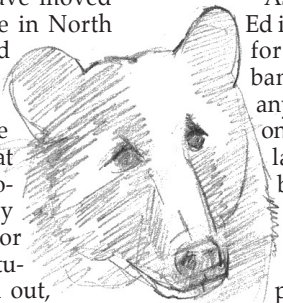
—John Green

News at the CCCCCs

Learning is in full swing at Cornwall Consolidated School (CCS) and the Cornwall Child Center (CCC). Robert Vaughan, the new principal of CCS, prepared himself this summer by reading 17 young-adult novels. His goal is to finish all the books in Mrs. Vanicky's upper-grade reading closet. When asked how he likes working in a Victorian-decorated office (lingering traces of the former principal), Mr. Vaughan chuckled, "It's a bit flowery, but the chandelier's gone and honestly, I can live with anything!" His immediate vision is to make sure every student is well prepared for high school. He has already begun evaluating the last three years' Connecticut Mastery Test scores by grades and by individuals with an eye toward curriculum improvements in the areas of math and reading.

CCS is buzzing with energy around the new solar panels being installed on the premises, a project overseen by the Cornwall Energy Task Force. The first stage of installation is complete, with three impressive poles sticking up from the ground, and a big, beautiful boulder unearthed in the digging process beckoning kids to sit, soak in the sun, and study the "solar system." Students will soon be able to monitor the activity on the solar panels via Fatspaniel.com.

Retiring from CCS in October, after eight years of custodial work at CCS, is Carl Bronson. Head custodian Pete Seli-no remarks that "Carl is going ... to be hard to replace!"



The CCS Fund for Excellence awarded its annual grant to art teacher Diane Dupuis. Ms. Dupuis hopes to take some seminars on non-toxic printmaking and anticipates that very soon there will be enough money raised from Art at the Dump to purchase a printing press for CCS.

Across the street at the Cornwall Child Center, director Pam Brehm exclaims, "The new toddler program is going great!" September marks the one-year anniversary of the program for one- to three-year-olds.

There is still some room for enrollment in all three programs at CCC, and while CCS welcomes enrollment, it also welcomes drive-bys who'd just like to steal a peek at the solar panel installation.

—Rachel Matsudaira

Good-Bye to Friends

Shirley Terry Wiltsie

Vaclav (Val) Petracek

Congratulations

Claire Ellis and Chad Cooper

Lydia Leeds and Laura Kaplan

Madelon Nunn-Miller and Diane Beebe

In Praise of Cornwall Agriculture

The challenges of local farming were summed up for all time in lines attributed to one of Cornwall's first landowners, The Rev. Isaac Stiles (1697–1760):

Nature, out of her boundless store

Threw Rocks together & did no more.

Considering the cold, wet summer as well as Nature's hard hand, Mr. Stiles might have expected little to celebrate at the 18th Agricultural Fair in Cornwall Village. Yet Cornwall farmers of all ages offered beautiful fruits, vegetables, and flowers. The judges tasted homemade pickles ("SOUR! But excellent!") and jams ("Just give me a spoon and let me go to a corner...") and declared every child's art entry worthy of a blue ribbon.

The Green was crowded with humans, llamas (led on leashes like large, fuzzy dogs), Black Angus, cows, rabbits, and ducks. Children jumped off a platform of hay bales that also came in handy for a throwing competition (baled) and throwing at your friends (loose).

Missing was the Cow-Chip Raffle, held a week later. The tickets had been printed with a fair date that was later changed. Connecticut's impressively thorough Cow-Chip Raffle regulations require these events to take place on the printed date. Appealed to, state officials proved to be as unyielding as Mr. Stiles's rocks.

—Julie Schieffelin



Cornwall Briefs

• **Rumsey Hall:** Owner Andrew Hingson told the *Chronicle* in the spring of '07 that he'd begin renovating that summer if he could retrieve the building from tentative bank foreclosure. He got Rumsey back, and now the structure seems to be going south in a hurry. One of the front columns has fallen, and some of the second floor has joined the floor below. There's even a view of the sky through holes in the roof. A fence blocks the front deck.

On September 1, Building Inspector Paul Prindle sent a letter to Mr. Hingson noting that the structure is unsafe according to the building code. Mr. Hingson responded that he planned to apply for a demolition permit. This plan, however, is complicated by the fact that the building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places in Connecticut. No one is sure how that will affect demolition plans, but it would seem that Rumsey Hall and its sunflowers will eventually disappear from Cornwall's landscape. Stay tuned.

• **Cell Towers:** Don't expect to see one of them babies rising on a Cornwall ridge any time soon. As of mid-September, Verizon had not submitted an application for either of the proposed sites, and now Cornwall's Inland Wetlands and Water Courses Agency has gotten into the act. In a letter to Verizon, Wetlands chairman Steve Hedden noted the "potential of negative environmental impact" by necessary prep work for the proposed access ways. Meanwhile, according to First Selectman Gordon Ridgway, a number of people have dropped by his office to volunteer their property for a cell tower site. He's keeping a list.

• **Covered Bridge Cleanup:** People were beginning to notice the dirt, the sand, the salt, the cobwebs, the guano. But it seems that the Connecticut DEP said a cleaning would wash the salt into the Housatonic. Bad for the river, they said. To the rescue came Scott Thibault of the Cornwall Thibaults who happens to be the district supervisor for bridge maintenance in northwest Connecticut. Scott arranged to have the bridge vacuumed and power-washed in September. The bridge: looking spiffy. The river: still rolling along.

• **Registration:** That would be for the November 3 town elections. Forms will be available at the Town Hall beginning October 2. The deadline for registering is October 20 by mail or October 27 in person.

• **Capital projects** scheduled for this fall include refinishing the floor, painting the exterior, and replacing the fuel tank, all at the Town Hall, plus a coat of stain for the Transfer Station. Looking good. —John Miller

Moserpalooza

James Henry Moser (1854–1913) was a painter known for his landscapes in oil and watercolor and for his illustrations, notably for *Uncle Remus*. He spent the last 30 summers of his life painting in Cornwall after marrying local girl Martha Scoville (aunt of Ralph Scoville). This August a party celebrated the

Letters to the Chronicle

350 CAMPAIGN

On October 24, you may see the logo 350 around town, and the churches will be ringing bells at 3:50 P.M. The number is the safe upper limit of CO₂ in our atmosphere, 350 ppm or parts per million. Currently our emissions measure 390; this explains why the Arctic is melting, why drought is spreading across the planet, and why storms are stronger.

Take action to raise awareness in your own way: shut off your computer or an appliance for 350 minutes, greet friends with "Happy 350 Day," make a 350.org sign for your car, bake cookies at 350 degrees.... People all over the world will be participating. See the great website at 350.org for other community collaborations. Post more ideas on the Cornwall Website.

—Katherine Freygang

MORE LOCAVORE POSSIBILITIES

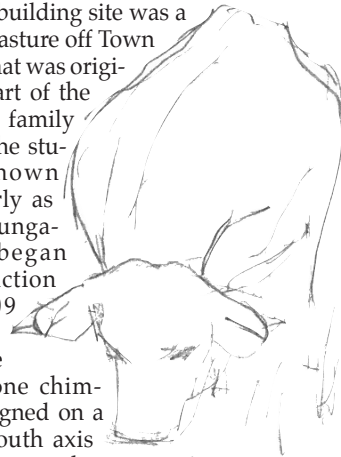
Is a whole, half, or even quarter cow too much meat for your freezer? [See August Chronicle.] No worries, you can still enjoy homegrown goodness without the 200-pound commitment.

In West Cornwall, Will Kennedy's Cream Hill Veal (creamhillveal@Yahoo.com or 672-0000) offers fresh or frozen cuts by the pound, including a 20-pound family pack, at the farm, the West Cornwall Farmers' Market or home delivery. Thomas Levine (672-6338 or thomaskll@mac.com) has whole chickens or pieces of beef, pork, or lamb at Longmeadow Farm.

100th anniversary of a local landmark: Moser's art studio in North Cornwall.

The building site was a sheep pasture off Town Street that was originally part of the Scoville family farm. The studio, known familiarly as "The Bungalow," began construction in 1909 with a massive fieldstone chimney. Aligned on a north-south axis to better use the northern light, the main structure was finished in 1911. According to daughter Lydia Moser Griggs, the family saved change in a large carboy water container for 20 years to finance the building.

Following Moser's death after a stroke in 1913, the studio was used as a summer residence without any major renovation for more than 60 years. "Running" water was supplied by a horse trough, which collected rainwater that fed a hand pump in the kitchen. "Central" heat was the wood cook stove. Plumbing was equally rustic. Modern



In Cornwall Bridge, it doesn't get more convenient than Chris Hopkins's Stone Wall Dairy (672-0261), open 24/7 for raw milk and eggs and, frequently, packages of beef and pork. Grab the rest of your dinner from Jonathan Kirschner's Stone Wall Vegetables (vegetablemanager@earthlink.net or 248-3070). Or, at Jessica Marshall and Peter Belhumeur's Sloping Pig Farm, small packages of beef and lamb are available in addition to pork; and goose will be flying into the freezer soon. For pick-up, contact me at maryleclark@msn.com.

Support your community and nourish your body by buying food raised in town.
—Mary-Lee Clark-Bell

TOUGH SUMMER, GOOD PEOPLE

In terms of injuries, this has been a very tough summer for Cornwall. We have lost friends in tragic circumstances. A string of other sad events have combined for a stressful season.

Members of the rescue squad and fire department have repeatedly gone beyond the call of duty, responding with care and competence. It has also been reassuring to see so many citizens help make bad situations better, as seen at the Dzenutis benefit party on August 31. Throughout these tragedies, Cornwall people have shown a cherished characteristic: volunteering to help their neighbors. The families at the centers of these tragedies have expressed to me their appreciations of their community's embrace.

—Gordon M. Ridgway

renovations were undertaken by great-grandson Todd Aichele and current owner Sue Johnson, Todd's sister.

This summer's celebration found the house still in the family and displaying many Moser paintings. Modern amenities make it comfortable, but it retains the charm of what was probably the first professional artist's studio in Cornwall. The cement of the huge chimney still proclaims "Jim/Grace" and "Martha/Lydia," the names just as clear as when the family inscribed them a century ago.
—Jim Longwell

Corrections

The agreement between Cream Hill Farm, LLC, and Sweet Peet, LLC, is a joint venture, not a lease, as was reported in the September Chronicle.

And we were wrong again when we reported that there are no contests in the November local elections. There are two: three candidates are running for two seats on the Board of Finance, and three are running for two seats on the Zoning Board of Appeals. Be sure to vote!

Events & Announcements

Absentee Ballots for the November 3 election will be available from the Town Clerk from October 2 to November 2.

The Cornwall Association will hold its annual meeting in the Library on Saturday, October 3, from 4 to 5:30 P.M. First Selectman Gordon Ridgway will give a state-of-the-town address, followed by a few words from Cornwall nonprofits. Refreshments will be served.

The Cornwall Village Improvement Society will hold its annual meeting at the Town Hall on Saturday, October 3, at 10 A.M. Call Secretary Richard Campbell (672-0560) with suggestions or comments.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day is scheduled for Saturday, October 10, from 9 A.M. to 2 P.M. at the Torrington Water Pollution Control Facility. Details and registration (required) are available at the Town Hall.

The Seventh Annual CCS Walk-a-Thon on October 9 starts at 1 P.M. at the intersection of Cream Hill Road and Cogswell Road. Participants can walk one, two-and-a-half, or four miles. Money raised will be shared among every grade and the Jane Lloyd Fund in support of local cancer patients and their families. Rain date is October 16. Information: 672-6617 or www.cornwallschool.org.

At the Library

Book Sale Preview Party: The Friends of the Cornwall Library will host a book sale preview party on Friday, October 9, from 6 to 8 P.M., to honor artist Robert Andrew Parker. Bob's new book, *Travels with Bob*, contains 300 color illustrations depicting his memories of growing up in the Midwest to traveling around the world. A limited edition is being printed at a price of \$250 each, but the party fee of \$25 will offer guests a chance to win a copy and munch on appetizers from all the countries the author has visited. Call the Library (672-6874) to purchase an advance ticket.

Elise Lemire will present and sign her book *Black Warden: Slavery and Its Aftermath in Concord, Massachusetts*, on Saturday, October 24, at 3 P.M.

Newsonomics

This newspaper's er, circulation strategy, is pretty simple. Anyone with a Cornwall address or post office box gets the *Chronicle* free. Which is why we need to make special appeals now and then—like the insert in this issue. Thank you for reading and responding.

We mail to out-of-town addresses for a yearly contribution of \$15 to cover the costs of maintaining the mailing list, labels, added postage, and handling.

Book sale begins Saturday, October 10, at 9 A.M., with a \$10 early bird fee, followed by regular hours from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M. Sunday hours are 11 A.M. to 3 P.M. The last sale day is Monday, from 9 A.M. to noon, with all remaining books half-price.

Motherhouse Activities: For more information, ticket prices, and to reserve places, contact Debra Tyler at 672-0229. See www.motherhouse.us.

October 10, 10:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. *Appily Ever After*, at the Local Farm barn, will explore the many uses of our autumnal apple harvest. Pre-register.

October 11, 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. Make a classic three-legged milking stool with Joe Brien at the Local Farm barn. Must pre-register.

The "Cornwall Neighbors" Poster Contest winner is Bianca Griggs with correct identification of 34 of the 54 local folks pictured in our current poster. Runners-up are Lesley Gyorsok and her daughter Linda, with 31 correct identifications, Vera Dinneen with 28, and Ann Gold with 27.

October 11 and 18. Meditation.

Pneumonia and Seasonal Flu Shots will be available through Torrington Area Health District on Tuesday, October 13, from 10 A.M. to noon at the Cornwall Library. Cost is \$50 for a pneumonia shot and \$30 for a flu shot; TAHD will bill Medicare Part B and Medicaid directly.

Annual Temporary Trail Closure: A section of the Mohawk Trail from the entrance at Dark Entry Road, Cornwall Bridge, to the Cornwall Village trailhead on Jewell Street will be closed from sunset on Friday, October 23, until sunrise on Monday, November 9. Questions: Kim Herkimer 672-6867 or Henry Edmonds (203) 426-6459.

Annual Town Meeting will be held Friday, October 23, at 7:30 P.M. in the CCS Gathering Room. The Annual Report will come under review; the Five-Year Capital Plan will be voted on.

Park and Recreation Activities

Interested in a golf league? Contact Bethany Thompson (672-4070), Michael Coe (672-6546), or cornwallparkandrecreation@yahoo.com.

Park and Rec. is looking for artists to volunteer to teach crafts at an after-school workshop. Contact Bethany.

A Halloween gathering will be held at the Town Hall on Saturday, October 31, from 5 to 8 P.M. Soups, salads, sandwiches, desserts, and beverages will be served.

Art in Cornwall: At the Cornwall Library, Joel Schapira's show of mixed-media work will continue through October 24.

Beginning October 27, Ellen Moon will show *Landscapes and Time*, watercolors from three years of daily painting.

Lady Audrey's Gallery is calling all artists to enter a juried show with the theme *Winter's Waltz*, which will open in December. Entry information may be found at www.ladyaudreysgallery.com. The *Bridges* exhibition continues through October, and English sculptor Christopher Stone will be at the gallery to open his exhibit *Stones by Stone* on November 1.

At the Wish House, the colorful textured acrylic landscapes and abstracts of H. Helmy are on display.

The Cornwall Conservation Trust will hold its annual meeting and hike at the John Welles property on Town Street, Sunday, October 18, at 1 P.M. Questions? Call Emilie Pryor at 672-4226.

Any Cornwall Village Household wanting to receive candy for trick-or-treaters please contact Bethany Thompson at 672-4070 (leave message with name and address) or cornwallparkandrecreation@yahoo.com.



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

OCTOBER ISSUE

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